

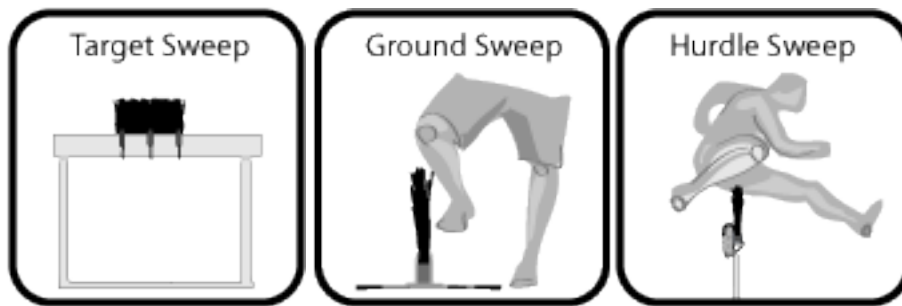


Training Sweeps™ by Lane Gainer

Hurdle Sweeps™ and Target Sweeps™
Instructions and Drills from Coach David Mitchell



Whisk away the fear of hitting the hurdles while learning!
Whisk past your competitors as your technique improves and your times drop!
Whisk your way to a clean sweep of the hurdle events with **Hurdle Sweeps™**!



Overview: When done properly, hurdling is a rhythmic sprint over barriers. The objectives are to minimize air time, maintain sprinting form, and to clear the hurdles as closely as possible without hitting it. Meet these objectives and you've met the goal of running the hurdle races as fast as you possibly can!



Hurdle Sweeps™

Purpose of Hurdle Sweeps™: To give hurdlers of all skill levels direct, immediate, pain-free feedback on their form and on their proximity to the hurdle. **Hurdle Sweeps™** removes the fear of making contact with the hurdle while encouraging excellent technique.

Progression: Begin each drill walking (aka Walkovers), then at Half-Speed, then at Race Pace. Do not advance to the next speed until the drill is being performed with the proper desired technique as outlined. Aim for perfection. Any flaw at slower speeds will be magnified at Race Pace. Each *Feel the Feedback* section below explains what the athlete will feel when the drill is executed with perfect form.

Walkovers: Focus on working toward perfect form with instant and consistent feedback from **Hurdle Sweeps™**. Build flexibility and specific muscle strength in the desired range of motion. Focus on whole body movement—arms in rhythm with legs. **Hurdle Sweeps™** will provide feedback to legs (and possibly to arms if varying from normal sprinting motion). Beneficial to hurdlers and to all other runners! Walkovers are typically performed with hurdles set at 30” (lowest setting) with no space between the hurdles.

Half-Speed: Start with 8 step high knee approach to the first hurdle. Focus on maintaining form while speeding up or increasing the stride rhythm (compared to Walkovers). Keep upper body position in mind to maintain balance. Again work to maintain optimal sprinting form. Half-speed drills are typically performed with hurdles set at 3” (one notch) lower than race height or at 30” (lowest setting) on 5 yards spacing.

Race Pace: Simulate the “feel” of racing conditions, speed and effort. Same form goals as above. Race pace drills are typically performed at race height or 3” lower on race spacing minus one yard or on race spacing.

Note: Maintain full distance from the start to the first hurdle for race pace drills. This will develop the necessary stride pattern. Can be performed using either blocks or from a standing start. Start with lead leg foot back in the blocks for the desired 8 step approach to the first hurdle. The 9th step will be over the hurdle! If the athlete can’t quite make it to the first hurdle in 8 steps in practice, move the athlete a bit closer to the first hurdle (over the starting line). It is more important to develop the 8 stride pattern from start to first hurdle than it is to start behind the line during practice.

Coaching Cues: Rarely is it beneficial to run over a full flight of hurdles at race height on full race spacing **in practice**. Simulate the race “feel” and get additional quality reps in by shortening the spacing, lowering the height of the hurdles, and/or reducing the number of hurdles run.

Hurdle Sweeps™ Drills

Attach Hurdle Sweeps™ to the hurdles, perform these drills with perfect form, and *Feel The Feedback!* Coach will also be able to see and hear the feedback as the athlete and Barrier Brush interact. More senses involved equals more learning in less time.

Note: All instructions are written for a left lead leg/right trail leg athlete. Simply flip all rights and lefts in the instructions for an athlete using right lead leg/left trail leg.

Whole Hurdle Drill: Work on technique, clearing the hurdle in the middle.

Speed: Walkover, Half-Speed, and Race Pace

Feel The Feedback: Hurdle Sweeps™ will provide the athlete feedback on the heel of lead foot and upper hamstring of lead leg and on the inner aspect of the knee and ankle of trail leg. Note: Many athletes will only get feedback on the ankle---this is a good thing!

Coaching Cue: Athlete must keep shoulders and hips “square” to the hurdle. Left arm will reach forward as lead leg clears the hurdle then will make a wide sweeping motion as trail leg clears the hurdle before returning to normal sprinting armswing. Right arm will maintain normal sprinting armswing throughout.

Half Hurdle Drills (aka Leads and Trails): Clear only half of the hurdle with the opposite half of the body in adjacent empty (no hurdles) lane.

Speed: Walkover and Half-Speed (NOT Race Pace).

A. Lead Leg Only (Leads): Approach hurdles (set in middle of lane as normal) while straddling the right lane line. Only the lead leg clears the hurdle.

Feel The Feedback: On the heel of lead foot and upper hamstring of lead leg.

Coaching Cues: Say: “Toe up. Heel up. Knee up.” to encourage proper lead leg action as athlete lifts lead leg to clear hurdle. Say: “Heel to hurdle” as athlete’s lead leg clears the hurdle. Trail leg will continue in a bouncy high-knee running rhythm throughout.

B. Trail Leg Only (Trails): Approach hurdles (set in middle of lane as normal) while straddling left lane line. With lead leg, simulate hurdling motion by taking an exaggerated “air step”. Lead foot MUST land 2’ to 3’ farther down the track than the hurdle. Only trail leg clears the hurdle.

Feel The Feedback: On the inner aspect of knee and ankle of trail leg. Many athletes will only get feedback on the ankle---this is a good thing!

Coaching Cues: Trail knee must always be higher than ankle. Stay square to the hurdle. Trail leg must take a full running stride. Don’t allow athlete to “chop” the stride of the trail leg by putting it down only a few inches in front of the spot where the lead foot landed on the track. Gain mastery at Walkovers before progressing to Half-Speed. Return to Walkovers to fix any problems; then go back to Half-Speed.

IMPORTANT TEACHING PROGRESSION: Order of drills---

Whole Hurdle—Leads---Trails---Leads—Whole Hurdle

Since Trail Leg success is dependant upon Lead Leg success, it is essential to perform twice as many total Lead Leg drills as Trail Leg drills.

Always begin and end with Whole Hurdle drills to ingrain the total successful series of motions into the muscle memory. The instant feedback from Hurdle Sweeps™ reinforces those optimal movements and eliminates incorrect movements quickly and painlessly!

Athlete should verbalize the feedback s/he felt to the coach.

The Hurdle Sweeps™

Fear Reduction Factor

PROBLEM:

LUKE/LUCINDA SKYWALKER---Athlete is “skying over” or clearing the hurdles with too much room to spare.

SOLUTION:

Set the hurdles at the desired height with **Hurdle Sweeps™** attached. Encourage the athlete to *Feel The Feedback* (same as Whole Hurdle Drills above) by aggressively clearing closer to the hurdle. Start with Walkovers, then Half-Speed and then Race Pace.

Coaching Cue: Change from the full size 4.5” version of **Hurdle Sweeps™** down to the 3” version and eventually the 1.5” version as the athlete progresses over the days and weeks of practice.

PROBLEM:

THE ICE PACK AND BAND-AID BUDGET IS GROWING OUT OF CONTROL!

Athlete continually bangs into the hurdle, resulting in the negative feedback of pain which leads to fear and tentative hurdling.

SOLUTION:

If possible, set the hurdle one notch (3”) lower than race height and attach **Hurdle Sweeps™**. The 3” version is ideal. Perform Walkover, Half-Speed and Race Pace drills with the goal being *NO FEEDBACK* from **Hurdle Sweeps™** or only a very light touch.

Coaching Cues: Check the take off point of the athlete, the hip flexor strength, and the flexibility of the athlete to determine if one of these factors is causing the problem. Return to the Whole Hurdle and Half-Hurdle Walkovers to diagnose and “fix” the problem.

PROBLEM:

SWIVEL HIPS---Athlete is twisting his/her torso while clearing the hurdle and subsequently has to twist back once on the ground in order to return to sprinting position thus slowing down with every clearance.

SOLUTION:

Whole and Half-Hurdle drills at Walkover and Half-Speed.

Feel the Feedback: On knee and ankle of trail leg. Many athletes will only get feedback on the ankle---this is a good thing!

Coaching Cues: Keep the trail knee higher than the ankle at all times. Exaggerate by bringing trail knee up into armpit. Make sure that arms are not crossing midline of body.

PROBLEM:

CRAZY LEGS---Instead of a straight forward and back linear motion of the lead leg, the athlete has excessive below the knee side to side action i.e. tucking the foot toward the opposite side of midline of the body. The *Feedback* this athlete will feel from **Hurdle Sweeps™** (while still practicing the wrong motion) would be on the outer aspect of the lead leg calf and the feedback would be longer in duration than optimal.

SOLUTION:

Return to Whole and Half-Hurdle drills to reinforce the correct lead leg motion.

Feel the Feedback: On the heel of lead foot as well as on the upper hamstring of the lead leg.

Coaching Cues: Say: “Toe up. Heel up. Knee up.” to athlete as athlete approaches the hurdle and “Heel to hurdle” as athlete clears the hurdle. Stick with Walkovers until the correct *Feedback* is felt on a consistent basis.

PROBLEM:

THE WANDERER aka THE SHORTEST DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO POINTS IS NOT A WAVY LINE---Athlete wanders from lane line to lane line (or even out of lane) adding distance to the race, losing momentum, clearing each hurdle on a different part of the hurdle/lane, and very likely losing the race!

SOLUTION:

Use the TARGET TRAINERS to give the athlete a specific area to clear each hurdle with lead leg, trail leg or both. Coach sets the TARGET TRAINERS in the desired area.

Feel the Feedback: Only when clearing the TARGET TRAINERS on the heel of lead foot and upper hamstring and on inner aspect of trail ankle and possibly trail knee.

ALTERNATE SOLUTION:

Set the TARGET TRAINERS on the outside edges of the hurdle only over the lane lines. DON'T Feel the Feedback at all by running between the TARGET TRAINERS.

Coaching Cues: Review arm and leg action in Whole and Half-Hurdle drills to determine if there are other factors contributing to this problem.

PROBLEM:

MOVING OUT—

Athlete needs to make the transition from indoor hurdling to outdoor hurdling and the longer flight of hurdles.

SOLUTION:

Set 12 hurdles on 30” or Race Height minus 3” at Race Spacing minus 1 yard with **Hurdle Sweeps™** on every hurdle (or at least on every other hurdle).

Workout: 1x12 hurdles; 1x10 hurdles; 1x8 hurdles; 1x6 hurdles; 1x4 hurdles at Race Pace with 3 minutes rest in between.

Feel The Feedback: Consistently on the heel of lead foot and upper hamstring and on inner aspect of the trail ankle and possibly trail knee.

Coaching Cues: Work with athlete to find out if s/he is feeling the same feedback over every hurdle noting a breakdown in form when fatigued (if it exists).

Additional to come on the Training Sweeps website:

Starts over straightaway hurdles

Starts over first 2 hurdles inn 300m or 400m hurdles

Curve hurdling

Training opposite lead leg for those who need to switch during the race